

233rd Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Sleat Community Trust

On: Monday 23rd of September 2024

In: Board Room

At: 18.00pm

MINUTES

1. Attendance, Apologies, and absences:

Garry Noakes GN (as acting Charing role), Andy Williamson (SCC) AW, Ade Stokes AS, Chris Pendlebury (SRL Chair) CJP, Flora MacLean (FM)

Apologies :

Ruairidh Morrison RM, Paddy McKay PM, Ruud van Ruitenbeek (SCTCL Chair) RvR, Myrielle Macleod MML (admin), Domhnall Angaidh MacLennan (SMO) DAM, Eilidh Grant EG

2. Items for AOB:

- a. Pan-Skye Windfarm benefit fund (AS)
- b. New volunteer opportunity – follow up

3. Declarations of Interest:

- a. AW for Community Council

4. Minutes of last meeting, matters arising:

- a. AS read the articles of the Trust on the Companies House website and noticed that SCT is not compliant with some of the items listed there.
ACTION POINT: make a summary of things that SCT are not compliant with before next SCT meeting – AS
- b. Insurance – early leaving of director’s insurance doesn’t appear possible on the current policy, despite the assurances we were given (AS)
- c. Forest school have been notified that we’re happy to undertake any PVG checks on their behalf (MML)
- d. Accountant invoices circulated to board chairs and will be paid in three instalments per each entity (MML)
- e. Fire safety checks have been done, with thanks for the help from Mike Shucksmith (MML)
- f. Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Community Partnership. **Action: AW to attend next meeting.**

5. Finance

- a. We have not quite reached the quarter end so figures are not available until the next board meeting, however an informal assessment suggests that we’re on track for targets for the quarter.
- b. No update on garage lease.
- c. No update on why the garage sale was declined previously. **Action: AS to follow up**

b. Insurance Review

- a. Contacted Zurich but not had a response yet (AS).
- b. Enquiry to Marsh resulted in a callback and they now have the template. Hopeful that they will respond soon (AS).

- c. DTAS have some discounts available to members. AS has written to them about this and is waiting for a response so that we can evaluate what the opportunities might be (AS).

6. SCTCL (Trading)

- a. No representative from SCTCL was able to attend the board meeting however the minutes of the last SCTCL board meeting were noted.
- b. Tormore venison: Shop needs to agree with Ardgay what quantity and cuts they want then next cull a carcass will be held back for them. Note that the shop needs to be sure it has the storage capacity.
Action: FM to talk to shop managers about next steps.

7. SRL (Renewables): General update CJP

- a. SRL chair to write to SCT board re incremental loan from SCTCL, as per discussion at August board meeting. **Action: CJP**
- b. Lochalsh Leisure Centre have paid their outstanding invoice
- c. An Crùbh have ordered more chip
- d. HMRC ongoing VAT payments issue still not resolved. CP has now contacted a different person/role at HMRC but was warned that a reply might be slow in coming (**CJP**)
- e. Long term forest plan due soon but has to go to consultation and then to Forestry Scotland and this has a long delay (months). This might stop us felling the second area before Sea Eagle nesting.
- f. SRL have sent out RFPs to four contractors for felling in the north area
- g. SRL are reviewing the Sitka plantation above the and considering getting rid of it but no consensus. Since the planting here is relatively young, CP has asked for separate quotes to assess whether this area has any value at this stage or should be retained (noting that, as its sitka, there are potential ongoing issues with retaining it).

8. Staffing: General Update

- a. New staff member in the shop

9. Strategy, governance and management AW

- a. Strategy meeting – not heard back from HIE, will get Strategy Group to meet and plan something as it was felt that this should happen before the AGM. **Action: AW, PM, AS to organise.**
- b. We will talk to DTAS to see if they can help us. **Action: AW to speak with DTAS.**
- c. Latest interest in Plot C at Capisdal has fallen through and it's now clear that this plot is not viable for low-cost housing. The board agrees it's time to rethink our strategy and look at alternative uses for this land.
- d. Ranger service – the board sees value in a Sleat-wide scheme but doesn't see this happening in the short term. The board has agreed that, given there is energy within the SRL board to pursue a localised option for Tormore, we should continue to explore this but be open to expand the project to work with other land owners if the opportunity arises (CP)
- e. AGM normally happens in November and must happen before the end of February.
 - a. Despite the obvious challenges, the board agreed to organise this for late November
 - b. We need to understand Board turnover (term expiration) and think about recruitment of new trustees.
 - c. This is also a chance to promote what SCT does and to encourage volunteers, ideas and engagement
 - d. **Action: AW to discuss planning and prep for AGM with MML once she is back from leave**

10. CRF2165: Playpark Report AW

- a. Local consultation as involved:
 - a. A copy of the plan was placed at the Ardvasar bus stop
 - b. 21 families consulted by online messaging, there were 14 responses
 - c. 7 people plus children met at the play park to review the plans

- b. Feedback received on the plans is positive and the community agrees that this is a big improvement. On meeting with families and local community members at the play park some changes were suggested and these are currently back with Highland Council and the supplier.
- c. We need to agree an MoU with Highland Council for the play park and this is with HC to respond to one outstanding minor question from us.

12. Office Rental/ Shared Office Use MM

- b. One person using the spare office and another using a hot-desk in the main office.

13. AOB – from items given in 2 above

- a. The board noted that it's fully supportive of the Office Manager working from home. It wondered if calls to the main office number could be forwarded to the SCT mobile on these days (MML)
- b. AD and MML attended a DTAS event in Staffin with 8/9 community trusts;
 - a. better to focus on business units than residential as CT not a social landlord
 - b. Democratic support funding service looks interesting and could be explored further for raising funds through crowd-funding, legacies and lotteries
 - c. Noted that most of the other trusts seem to have BDO funding. Would be useful for us to follow up with them/DTAS how they are managing to do this and see if there are any lessons to learn (Action: Strategy group to follow up)
- c. Climate Hub – Pan-Skye Windfarm community benefit fund. Agree in principle to support Climate Hub to pursue this matter as it's pragmatic and sensible to be co-ordinated about this matter, it was also noted that other development trusts are supportive of the idea. However, we must separate any discussion about future funding from implicit support for proposed generation projects. Action: AS to draft a response and circulate to the board.
- d. Email received from a member of the community offering to volunteer. Action: AW to follow up
- e. AW to chair next meeting (unless someone else volunteers!)

The meeting finished at 7.30pm. The next meeting is on Monday, 28 October at 18:00 in the Board Room.